

WASHINGTON – Today, the three-member Task Force charged with examining the election contest filed in Florida's 13th District moved to dismiss the contest after receiving the Government Accountability Office (GAO) final report indicating that the electronic voting systems used in Sarasota County functioned properly.

After losing to Representative Vern Buchanan, R-Fla., by 369 votes in November of 2006, democratic challenger Christine Jennings filed a contest with the Committee on House Administration saying, "the electronic voting machines in Sarasota County failed to record votes in this race." According to the filing submitted by Jennings, the electronic voting machines malfunctioned, causing an undervote in Sarasota County. However, after a 10-month long investigation that involved extensive testing of the voting machines, the GAO concluded that the machines accurately recorded election ballots.

Dr. Nabajyoti Barkakati, a senior technologist with the GAO's Center for Technology and Engineering, testified that the GAO has completed all of its objectives, and does not recommend additional testing. In his report, Barkakati stated that the undervote in Sarasota County could have been caused by, "factors such as voters who intentionally undervoted, or voters who did not properly cast their ballots on the iVotronic DRE, potentially because of issues relating to interaction between voters and the ballot."

The GAO's findings matched those of a Florida state audit, which found no problems with the machines, as well as two recounts.

"I applaud the bipartisan unanimous vote to dismiss this election challenge," Task Force Member, Rep. Kevin McCarthy, R-Calif., stated after reviewing the final report. "We reached a conclusion that strengthens voters' confidence in Sarasota County and throughout America that their votes in the 2006 election were counted accurately, honestly, and correctly."

Dismissal of the contest could move to the full Committee on House Administration for consideration as early as next week. For more information, please contact the Committee press office at (202) 225-8281.

[Click here for the Results of GAO's Testing of Voting Systems Used in Sarasota County in Florida's 13th Congressional District \(pdf\)](#)